

gurum upapadyāmahe:
**The Volume Dedicated to Professor Gerhard Oberhammer
on the Occasion of His 90th Birthday***

Preface

I

This volume of the *Cracow Indological Studies* is very special for us—Cracovian Indologists. We would like to dedicate it to our great teacher and friend, Professor Gerhard Oberhammer, who has exerted his impact on almost every piece of academic writing and research that has come into existence in our Department during the last 30 years, not to mention the *Cracow Indological Studies* journal itself. Most of us met Professor Oberhammer for the first time when he invited some of us to the 8th World Sanskrit Conference in Vienna in 1990, just after Poland set out on its course to become a democratic country. The beginnings of the journal date back to the first international indological conference organized by us in 1993. It was Professor Oberhammer’s suggestion to hold the opening conference in Kraków, “opening” in the sense that it marked a new period of Polish Indology, being able, finally, to develop more directly with world Indology. Thanks to Professor Oberhammer’s help we had the chance to invite many distinguished scholars to Cracow. The *International Conference on Sanskrit and Related Studies*

¹ Paragraph I is authored by Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz in collaboration with Ewa Dębicka-Borek, paragraph II is written by Ewa Dębicka-Borek in collaboration with Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz.

was a great success and a turning point for many of us, then young scholars, and at that moment without proper academic guidance after the premature deaths of our Polish teachers. The idea of the journal formed during the conference and the conference proceedings constituted its first issue.

My (Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz's) personal collaboration with Professor Oberhammer began in 1991 when I was invited to Vienna for the first time to collect essential material for my PhD. Just after successfully submitting it, I was invited by Professor Oberhammer to join the team working on Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra literature and to collaborate on a large project of the Austrian Academy of Sciences entitled *Tāntrikābhidhānakośa. A Dictionary of Technical Terms from Hindu Tantric Literature*, involving many scholars from different countries. The project continues to this very day and work on its fourth volume is in progress.

I have been coming to Vienna for many years, also as part of the agreement between the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS) and the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN), as its Polish coordinator. However, there were also other colleagues from Cracow working for different periods of time with Professor Oberhammer within the agreement: Halina Marlewicz, Anna Nitecka and Ewa Dębicka-Borek. Apart from them Lidia Sudyka, Cezary Galewicz and Iwona Milewska were also able to benefit from Professor Oberhammer's advice and expertise. As part of the agreement Professor Oberhammer would come to Cracow, visiting us every year, giving lectures for our students and colleagues, working with members of our academic team in the Department of Indology and later also supervising the work of our doctoral students. It would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that most of the PhDs and habilitations in our department we owe to Professor Oberhammer, his advice, consultations and the possibility of using the resources of the great Indological library in the Institut für Südasiens-, Tibet- und Buddhismuskunde of the University of Vienna.

The range of research topics undertaken in our department has been relatively broad, from Indian philosophy, through religion, history to pure literary studies, also *kāvya*, and Professor Oberhammer

has helped all of us, if not in person, then through his vast contacts in the academic world, which he has generously shared with us. My interest in Pāñcarātra, which has been a very satisfying and enjoyable subject for me for so many years, I owe to Professor Oberhammer's suggestion. Having begun with meticulous readings of the canonical Pāñcarātra literature with him, I continued with my interest in the still-existing communities of Pāñcarātrikas in the South of India, their spectacular temple cult, as well as the splendid religious art of South Indian temples. All these topics, having their source in my work with Professor Oberhammer, structured my academic life and I daresay that the impact of collaborating with Professor Oberhammer was similarly crucial in the case of my other colleagues from Cracow. Thus, it is impossible to over-estimate Professor Oberhammer's influence on establishing the position of our department as a recognizable indological center. We are also very proud of our journal being present in the most important indological libraries. Professor Oberhammer may claim credit for much of it.

Gerard Oberhammer's personal achievements in the field of Indology are distinguished and no one working on Indian philosophy and Vaiṣṇava religion can possibly be unaware of them. They form an integral part of the basis of indological consideration on Indian philosophy, beginning with the reflections on the structure of yogic meditation up to his deep interest in the philosophy of Rāmānuja and his disciples and followers. The spectacular series of the *Materialien zur Geschichte der Rāmānuja-Schule* remains the most important contribution to the study on this particular phenomenon of South Indian culture. Much has been said and written about Professor Oberhammer's method, since, as an experienced and original scholar, he has his own way of working with Sanskrit sources.

Some years ago, while our colleagues from Vienna—Roque Mesquita and Chlodwig H. Werba—were publishing the volume of the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* entitled *Orbis Indicum* and dedicated to Professor Oberhammer, they created a beautiful, Sanskrit *Prastāvanā* for him.

They wrote:

bhāratamaṇḍalaṃ jñātvā, bahurūpaprapaṅcakam |
yaś tadaikyam mokṣaparam, anveṣṭum upacakrame || 1
taṃ vidvāmsaṃ śivaprājñam, abhivandāvahe gurum |
uttamavajro jayatu, jayatv ṛṣṭidṛḍhaḥ sadā || 2

We salute respectfully this learned Teacher of gracious knowledge,
 Who, knowing the multiform country of Bharatas,
 Undertook the search of unity leading to emancipation.
 Long live the Hardest Diamond! Long live always the Mighty Spear!
 (Transl. Lidia Sudyka)

Indeed, Professor Oberhammer, with his intellectual, but also physical strength, stamina and dedication to his work, has been an example to us, as well as being our teacher for many years, challenging our doubts and our laziness, leading and supporting us on our way to becoming better researchers.

Professor Oberhammer's academic achievements are impressive and begin with his philosophical dissertation of 1954, concerning Plotinian thinking (*Die Erkenntnismethodenphysik im Gesamtzusammenhang plotinischen Denkens*). In 1971 he published his first work on the Rāmānuja School, which explored Yāmuna's interpretation of the *Brahmasūtra* 2,2,42–45; in 1977 he published *Strukturen yogischer Meditation*, and these first major works represent some of the main directions in his academic interests. Nine volumes of the *Materialien zur Geschichte der Rāmānuja-Schule*, which were published from 1979 to 2008, are among the most spectacular academic achievements of incomparable value for discovering the philosophy of the Rāmānuja and his disciples for a broader community of scholars. Professor Oberhammer's deep insight into theosophical-philosophical problems of Indian thought as well as his sensitivity to the terminological nuances in the domain of Indian philosophy and religion flourished in his great endeavours in compiling two important dictionaries: *Terminologie der frühen philosophischen Scholastik in Indien* and *Tāntrikābhidhānaśāstra. A Dictionary of Technical Terms from Hindu Tantric Literature*. Being co-edited by other scholars, just as many

other of his works, they constitute an indispensable element in the study of Indian philosophy and religion.

Some of the subjects studied by Professor Oberhammer have become our inspirations and fascinations, and this is evident in the present volume.

No less important and fascinating is Professor Oberhammer's methodology, described sometimes as the "Hermeneutics of Encounter". Such was the title of the volume dedicated to him on the occasion of his 65th birthday, edited by Francis X. D'Sa and Roque Mesquita (Vienna 1994). In the volume D'Sa analyzes this specific methodology of Professor Oberhammer, characterized by engagement into the complicated process of understanding human nature through a deep insight into the texts of other cultures. As D'Sa writes:

For Oberhammer a text is the place of an hermeneutic encounter; and so he approaches it not merely to find out what it said historically but what the referent could possibly mean today—that is to say, for him a text is a bridge between reality and the reader. Unlike some from exegetical tribe for whom a text is but a written form of discourse and which like oral discourse can be univocally understood, Oberhammer's approach is sophisticated enough to know that between the world of the text and that of the reader lies a distance that is temporal as well as cultural, philosophical as well as theological, a distance that needs to be overcome if any understanding has to take place at all. Moreover, Oberhammer is aware that such a distance cannot be overcome merely by method, be it ever so historical and critical. Methods, however helpful they may be, are unable to function beyond the semiotic and the semantic stages of understanding; for this very purpose Oberhammer has been striving for an hermeneutic awareness of a text and the happening of tradition. (D'Sa 1994: X)¹

We find this opinion very accurately describing Professor Oberhammer's approach towards understanding of the other, and through this of oneself.

II

We are honoured that by means of the present volume we could inscribe ourselves in the whole range of celebrations of our Great Teacher on

¹ For Oberhammer's methodology see also Marlewicz 2002/2003 and Marlewicz 2018.

the occasion of his 90th birthday. Designed as just a humble homage by his disciples, his collaborators and scholars inspired by his research, the volume covers a wide panorama of subjects, all of which, we hope, if not reflect Professor Oberhammer's own research interests, are at least close to his heart. Some papers address the problems more or less directly connected to Professor Oberhammer's field of expertise that is Viśiṣṭādvaitavedānta tradition (Suganya Anandakichenin, Elisa Freschi, Marcus Schmücker) or explore various aspects of closely related Pāñcarātra (Marion Rastelli) or Vaikhāṇasa (Gérard Colas) schools. The others contextualize innovative elements in Indian philosophy (Johannes Bronkhorst), contribute to studies on diverse facets of *bhakti* ideology (Ewa Dębicka-Borek, Lidia Sudyka), Tantric Śākta religious tradition of the Śrīvidyā (Silvia Schwarz Linder) or retrace the steps of the first publishers of the Veda (Cezary Galewicz). Such a wide scope of topics prompted us to arrange the content alphabetically.

Suganya Anandakichenin's paper focuses on how three medieval Śrīvaiṣṇava commentators, that is Periyavāccāṇ Pillai (13th c.), Aḷakiya Maṇavāla Perumāḷ Nāyaṇār (14th c.) and Vedānta Deśika (14th c.) interpret Tiruppāṇ Ālvār's decade of verses known as *Amalaṇṭipirāṇ*. Being devoted to the description of physical beauty of the god Raṅganātha 'from the foot to the head' (*pādādi-keśa-varṇana*), the set of ten verses touches upon an important Śrīvaiṣṇava concept of a deity accessible to his devotees in his tangible iconic form (*arcā*). Drawing on the relevant samples of the three commentaries, Anandakichenin not only attempts to provide the answers to the questions about the individual styles and intentions of respective authors, but also, considering to what extent they influenced the followers of each commentator, she pays special attention to differences in their views regarding the physical aspect of the deity.

The socio-political contexts in which innovations took place in Indian philosophy are in turn discussed by Johannes Bronkhorst in his polemics with Jonardon Ganeri's recent proposals. Taking into account three particular episodes that might be viewed as displaying the introduction of fresh thoughts—innovations of Raghunātha in the Nyāya

school of thought; the innovations which brought about such concepts as *satkāryavāda*, *pariṇāmvāda*, *śūnyavāda* and *anekāntavāda*; and the innovations that triggered rational philosophy in India—the author attempts to convey that these are circumstances that inspire modern authors to depart from or criticize the ancients.

Similarly to Anandakichenin's work, icons of Viṣṇu are also the topic of the article by Gérard Colas, who, however, discusses them in the perspective of the Vaikhānasa ritual manual entitled *Vimānārcanakalpa* (ca. 10th c.) attributed to sage Maṛīci. The analysis of a plethora of ritual and iconographic prescriptions about man-made icons conceptualized by the author under the headings “troubled icon/deity” and “troubling icons” offers an insight into the socio-religious context of installation of new icons. If maintained in a defectless form, they secure welfare to the patron, the village and the kingdom or sustain an ideal social hierarchy.

The paper of Ewa Dębicka-Borek takes us to yet another literary genre. Basing on selected passages of a drama entitled *Vāsantikā-pariṇaya* and an eulogy of Ahōbilam, the *Ahobilamāhātmya*, both connected to the same and nowadays rather neglected Śrīvaiṣṇava holy site situated in present Andhra Pradesh, the author explores two literary motifs intended to show the highest devotion to the god in his Narasiṃha aspect: the motif of the recognized deity's second wife and the motif of self-decapitation. As Dębicka-Borek suggests, contextualized within the religious and social history of peripheral Ahōbilam both narratives should be seen as mirroring trajectories of processes aimed at integration of certain communities, a tribal and a Śaiva one respectively, into the locally impacted form of Vaiṣṇavism.

Whilst Dębicka-Borek's interest lies in local forms of Narasiṃha worship, Elisa Freschi's deliberations constitute a contribution which in a refreshing way combines the issues concerning iconography of Hayagrīva with the changes within the theology of the Viśiṣṭādvaita school which took place under the influence of Vedānta Deśika. Taking as a point of departure the concept of re-use, Freschi step by step analyses the process how a minor pan-Indian deity became

a local well-known symbol of the Vedas and learning for the followers of a Viśiṣṭādvaita's sub-school.

In turn, Cezary Galewicz retraces the first steps towards putting the Veda into print in the context of a new wave of missionary work in India. As he shows, the exceptional figure among the Protestant missionaries who participated in this kind of projects was Rev. John Stevenson of the Church of Scotland. The combination of missionary zeal with his appreciation of Indian religions and vernacular literatures led Stevenson to prepare the first Indian edition of the initial part of the *Ṛksamhitā* in unaccented Devanāgarī, supplied with a Sanskrit gloss, a Marāṭhī rendering and an English translation (*The Threefold Science*, Bombay 1833). The paper discusses the circumstances of Stevenson's publishing activity and provides some ideas about the ideology that might have been behind his complex work, especially in reference to the Protestant idea of translating the Scripture from its original languages into the vernaculars with the aim of sending its message to the public.

The approach proposed by Marion Rastelli in her article on worshipping Viṣṇu's twelve manifestations, that is tracking the development of particular religious concepts, aims also at contribution towards ascertaining the chronology of certain texts. The paper deals with the so far hardly explored theme of early medieval lay practices among Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava traditions. Rastelli's case study focuses on widely known monthly observances (*vrata*) devoted to a set of the twelve manifestations of Viṣṇu, usually known as the "lords of the months" (*māseśa*), which were incorporated into the theology of the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra tradition as the so-called Vyūhāntaras, but were also significantly influential beyond the realm of Vaiṣṇavism.

Using the concepts of pre-reflective consciousness known to the European tradition, Marcus Schmücker seeks to demonstrate the differences and the accordance between concepts of (self)consciousness in the Indian Vedānta traditions of Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita. His investigations lead to the conclusion that both schools apply a concept of consciousness which correlates with Manfred Frank's idea of self-consciousness and self-knowledge.

The next paper, authored by Silvia Schwarz Linder, focuses on the *Tri-purārahasya* text associated with the Tantric Śākta religious tradition of the Śrīvidyā. By means of scrutinizing its chosen passages in the light of the relevant works of the Pratyabhijñā's authors, Schwarz Linder investigates how the Pratyabhijñā twofold doctrine known as *svā-tantryavāda* and *ābhāsavāda* was reformulated within the *Tripurārahasya*. The author takes into consideration both the main features of the recast doctrine as well as inconsistencies within it, which possibly occurred under the impact of the particular theories expounded in the *Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha*.

The article by Lidia Sudyka concerns the Hunting Festival (*mṛgayotsava*), an event which usually constitutes a part of the Spring Festival (*vasantotsava*). Sudyka's point of departure is the *Virūpākṣa-vasantotsava-campū*, a text written by a certain Ahobala (ca 15th c.), which quite exceptionally reveals some autobiographical traits. Having discussed many instances of the hunting motif in Sanskrit and South Indian local traditions that usually culminate with the king encountering a forest-dweller, the author launches an interesting hypothesis that in this particular case the hunting episode serves to depict the transformation of experiences associated with a public royal sphere into the experience belonging to a private sphere, namely a meeting of a devotee with a god.

As editors, we would like to thank all the authors who, having accepted our invitation to the volume, join us in celebrating Professor Oberhammer's great anniversary.

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Fig. 1. Professor Gerhard Oberhammer receives the Jagiellonian University *Merentibus* Medal. Collegium Maius, Jagiellonian University, May 1998.



Fig. 2. Professor Gerhard Oberhammer with members of the Indology Department.
From the left: Przemysław Piekarski, Halina Marlewicz, Lidia Sudyka, Iwona Milewska, Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz and Professor Gerhard Oberhammer.
Collegium Maius, Jagiellonian University, May 1998.